The organ of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, WC2.

By John Shepherd, B. C. Shepherd & Sons, Organ Builders, Edgware, Middlesex.

The church was opened in 1848, and paid for by Sir Samuel Morton Peto MP.

The first organ in the church was built by an unknown builder in 1848. This was altered and improved by Father Willis in 1850. It had a major repair in 1879 by T. C. Lewis.

In 1914 a completely new organ was built by Brindley & Foster of Sheffield. It had tubular pneumatic action, with sliderless ventil chests, with about 20 speaking stops.

In 1964 the organ was rebuilt by Hill, Norman & Beard, who electrified the primary action of the Brindley chests, and did some tonal alterations, adding new pipework. They supplied a new detached drawstop console in the side gallery. At this time the organ was moved from the front of the church, and was divided in the rear gallery, with the Pedal Principal stop arranged under the rose window in the centre. In 1968 they added a small new choir organ and the Pedal Trombone. There were 34 speaking stops.

1964 specification									
Great			Swell			Choir	(encl	os	ed)*
Contra Dulciana	Α	16	Geigen Principal		8	Dulciana		Α	8
Open Diapason		8	Rohr Gedeckt		8	Spitz Flute		Ε	8*
Stopped Flute		8	Viola da Gamba		8	Flute		Ε	4*
Dulciana	Α	8	Vox Angelica (TC)		8	Nazard		F	2.2/3*
Principal		4	Gemshorn		4	Piccolo		Ε	2*
Chimney Flute		4	Flauto Magico (harn	noni) 4	Tierce (TG))		1.3/5*
Spitz Quinte		2.2/3	Fifteenth		2	Larigot		F	1.1/3*
Fifteenth		2	Mixture(15,19,22)		Ш	Clarinet (pr	epare	ed	for) 8*
Trumpet		8	Contra Oboe	В	16				
			Trompette		8				
Pedal			Tremulant			Balanced S	well	pe	dal
Sub Bass		16				Balanced C	Choir	pe	dal
Echo Bass	Α	16	Couplers						
Principal	С	8	Swell Octave	G	t/Pe	d combin. cou	ıpled		
Bass Flute	D	8	Swell Sub Octave						
Fifteenth	С	4	Swell Unison off						
Octave Flute	D	4	Swell to Great						
Trombone		16	Swell to Choir	5	pisto	ns to each ma	anual		
Bassoon	В	16	Choir to Great	5 t	toe p	istons to Sw.	5 toe	e p	istons to Ped.
			Swell to Pedal	5 ı	ever	sible thumb p	oiston	S	
61 note manuals			Great to Pedal	2	revei	rsible toe pist	ons		
32 note pedals			Choir to Pedal	Se	tter	piston Gen	eral (Cai	ncel piston

We took over the maintenance of the organ for a period in the late 1980s. By this time the Brindley & Foster internal pneumatic motors were perishing, and causing a lot of ciphering. We gave an estimate for rebuilding the organ with new soundboards, and using the Binns pipework from Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Watford.

In 1990 J. H. Males of Polgate, Sussex rebuilt the organ, and fitted direct electric action to the manual soundboards. He also made a number of tonal changes, and enlarged the Choir and Pedal departments, using secondhand pipework by Rushworth & Dreaper and Brindley & Foster. The tonal work was done by Michael Broom. There were 44 speaking stops.

1990 specification								
•			Swell			Choir (e	Choir (enclosed)	
Contra Dulciana	Α	16	Geigen Principal		8	Spitz Flute	8	
Open Diapason		8	Rohr Gedeckt		8	Rohr Flute	8	
Stopped Flute		8	Viola da Gamba		8	Gemshorn	4	
Dulciana	Α	8	Vox Angelica	(AA)	8	Flute	4	
Principal		4	Principal		4	Principal	2	
Chimney Flute		4	Flauto Magico (st	topped)	4	Larigot	1.1/3	
Spitz Quinte	2.2	2/3	Fifteenth		2	Sesquialtera (12,1	7) II	
Fifteenth		2	Mixture (22,26,2	29)	Ш	Cymbale (29,33,36	5) III	
Mixture (19,22,26,29)		IV	Contra Oboe	С	16	Cremona	D 8	
Trumpet	В	8	Trompette		8	Trompette (unencl	osed) 8	
Clarion	В	4	Oboe	С	8			
			Clarion		4			
Couplers (some by rocking tablets)								
Pedal			Swell Tremulant					
Principal	Ε	16	Choir Tremulant			8 General thumb pist	ons	
Bourdon	F	16	Swell Octave			6 thumb pistons to ea	ach manual	
Dulciana	Α	16	Swell Sub Octave	9		6 toe pistons to Sw. 6	toe pistons to Ped.	
Quint F&G	10	.2/3	Swell Unison off			5 reversible thumb pi	stons	
Principal	Ε	8	Swell to Great			2 reversible toe pistor	าร	
Bass Flute	G	8	Swell to Choir			Setter piston		
Fifteenth	Ε	4	Choir to Great			General Cancel piston	ı	
Octave Flute	G	4	Swell to Pedal			8 channel capture sys	tem	
Trombone		16	Great to Pedal					
Bassoon	С	16	Choir to Pedal		-	Balanced Swell pedal		
Cremona	D	4			ı	Balanced Choir pedal		
Spare knob			Gt/ Ped combin.	couple	d	Generals to Sw. Com	ıb.	

In 2007 J. H. Males rebuilt the console with new drawstop jambs, and electrics, and new solid state switching and piston capture system by Dedham Organ Systems.

The church felt that the tonal scheme was not entirely satisfactory, as it had pipes of various styles and periods, and we were asked to submit a scheme of tonal modification. We suggested replacing most of the pipes with Binns pipework from the late lamented organ of Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Watford built circa. 1910, which we had in store for more than 20 years. We tried sample pipes from many ranks, and these were found to be very satisfactory. A tonal scheme was drawn up in consultation with the organist Philip Luke who has recently completed 25 years service at the church (and whom we have known for more than 30 years). The church were told of another redundant Binns organ at St. Augustine's Church, Tonge Moor, Bolton (which was originally built for St. Paul's, North Shore, Blackpool in 1916). A number of ranks were obtained from this organ to augment the pipework from Watford, including a few pipes added later by others.

Between 2006 and 2008 B. C. Shepherd & Sons have replaced most of the existing pipes almost exclusively with pipes by J. J. Binns of Bramley, Leeds. The repairing, modifying and fitting of the

pipes has been done by our colleague Nicholas Hillman, and John and Eric Shepherd. More than 2300 pipes have been replaced or relocated. A small number of Brindley & Foster pipes have been retained, as have some Rushworth and Dreaper pipes added in 1990. The newly fitted pipes and the remaining pipes have been adjusted, regulated and tonally finished by John and Eric Shepherd. They have also voiced new pipes for the Swell, Great and Choir Mixtures, for the additional ranks, and to modify the breaks to give more brightness, and a few new pipes where originals were missing. These pipes were made by Don Wherly, who also made new tuning slides.

Additions at this time include a Vox Humana on the Swell, a 16 foot octave to the Great Trumpet rank, a Tuba on the Choir, a 32 foot reed bottom octave, and an extension of the Pedal Principal rank to 2 foot pitch.

The Vox Humana chest was made and fitted by John Males, who also fitted the Tuba chest, and the chests for the 32 foot reed.

The 32 foot reed has been voiced by Keith Bance who made the boots, and used half length resonators (formerly Ophicleide pipes) by Rushworth & Dreaper kindly donated by St. Paul's Church, Onslow Square, Kensington, from the redundant organ there. Keith has also gone through the voicing of other reed stops, especially the Tuba which had been vandalised at Watford. Kevin Rutterford repaired the damaged Tuba pipes and made several new pipes where some were missing. He also modified and repaired the pipes of the 32 foot reed.

Former pipes retained in this scheme include Pedal Open Diapason(metal) 16, Pedal Dulciana 16, Swell Clarion 4, Choir Sesquialtera 2 ranks, Choir Larigot 1.1/3 (formerly Swell Fifteenth 2), and Choir Trompette (formerly on Swell). In addition a few top and bottom octaves of former stops have been retained to complete certain ranks.

The organ is now one of the largest and most complete in a Baptist Church in the British Isles, and the only one to have a 32 foot reed.

There are now 52 speaking stops and 2680 speaking pipes in the organ.

2008 specification						
Great						
Bourdon	Α	16 *W	Geigen Princip	oal	8 *W	
Open Diapason		8 *W	Lieblich Geda	ct	8 *W	
Flauto Traverso (Ha	rmonic)	8 *W	Viol d'Orchest	re	8 *W	
Stopped Diapason	Α	8 *W	Voix Celeste	(AA)	8 *W	
Dolce		8 *W	Geigen Princip	oal	4 *W	
Principal		4 *W	Lieblich Flute		4 *W	
Harmonic Flute		4 *W	Fifteenth		2 *B	
Octave Quint		2.2/3 *B	Mixture	(15,19,22)	III *B&N	
Fifteenth		2 *W	Bassoon	С	16 *W&BL	
Mixture (15,19,22	2,26)	IV *W&N	Horn		8 *B	
Double Trumpet	В	16 *W&B	Oboe	С	8 *W	
Trumpet	В	8 *W	Vox Humana		8 S/H	
Clarion	В	4 *W	Clarion		4 BL	
Swell to Great		Tremulant				
Choir to Great		Octave				
			Sub O	ctave		
			Uniso	n off		

Choir (enclosed)		Pedal				
		Sub Bass	G	32 +		
Salicional	8 *W	Open Diapason	(metal) F	16 BL		
Gedact	8 *B	Bourdon	G	16 *B		
Principal	4 *W	Dulciana		16 BL		
Wald Flute	4 *B					
Piccolo D	2 *B	Principal	F	8 *BL&B		
Larigot	1.1/3 BL	Bass Flute	Α	8 *W		
Flageolet D	1 *B	Fifteenth	F	4 *B		
Sesquialtera (12,17)	II BL	Octave Flute	Α	4 *W		
Sharp Mixture (22,26,29)	III B&N	Twenty Second	F	2 *B		
Clarinet E	8 *B	Sackbut	Н	32 S/H&BL		
Tremulant		Trombone	Н	16 BL		
Unenclosed		Bassoon C		16 *BL&W		
Trompette	8 BL	Trumpet	В	8 *W		
Tuba	8 *W	Clarinet	Е	4 *B		
Octave		Swell to Pedal				
Sub Octave		Great to Pedal				
Unison off		Choir to Pedal				
Swell to Choir						

Gt & Ped Combs coupled Gens to Sw toe pistons

* = Indicates stops with Binns pipework

W = Binns pipes from Beechen Grove Baptist Church, Watford c1910

B = Binns pipes from St. Augustine's Church, Tonge Moor, Bolton 1916

BL = Pipes from existing Bloomsbury organ (Brindley & Foster 1914, Rushworth & Dreaper 1955, Hill, Norman & Beard 1964 & 1968)

N = New pipes supplied 2008

S/H = Secondhand pipes supplied 2008

+ Compton polyphone pipe added 2010

8 General Thumb pistons	8 toe pistons to Swell
8 thumb pistons to Swell	8 toe pistons to Pedal
8 thumb pistons to Great	Reversible toe pistons for Gt to Ped Sw to Gt
8 thumb pistons to Choir	1 > sequencer toe piston
Reversible thumb pistons	1 < sequencer toe piston
for Sw to Gt Sw to Ch Ch to Gt	
Sw to Ped Gt to Ped Ch to Ped	Dedham Organ Systems piston capture system
3 > sequencer thumb pistons	256 general channels
1 < sequencer thumb piston	12 divisional channels
Setter thumb piston	
General Cancel thumb piston	

Balanced Swell pedal Compass of Manuals CC to c 61 notes
Balanced Choir pedal Compass of Pedals CCC to g 32 notes

Wind pressures:

Great 3.5/8" Swell 4.1/2" Choir 3.3/8" Tuba 10" Pedal 3.5/8" and 4.1/2".

Compositions of Mixtures:

Great Mixtur	e	Swell Mixture	Choir Sharp Mixture
15,19,22,26	C(1) to b(24)	15,19,22 C(1) to f(42)	22,26,29 C(1) to b(12)
12,15,19,22	c(25) to c(37)	12,15,19 f#(43) to f(54)	19,22,26 c(13) to b(24)
8,12,15,19	c#(38) to b(48)	8,12,15 f#(55) to c(61)	15,19,22 c(25) to b(36)
5, 8,12,15	c(49) to c(61)		12,15,19 c(37) to b(48)
			8,12,15 c(49) to c (61)

Choir Sesquialtera 12,17 throughout

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